

OX CART SURFACING PRESS RELEASE

The capability to conduct aerial reconnaissance has proved of vital importance to the United States and the Free World. In 1959, the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and others urged that a successor to the U-2 aircraft be developed which could fly at three times the speed of sound. The Central Intelligence Agency was directed to proceed with such a development, and the program has been continued by both the Eisenhower and present administrations.

This aircraft was successfully developed by the CIA at a secret test site in the west where it has been flying since the spring of 1962. It has never been used to overfly foreign territory but gives the United States a powerful latent capability to examine promptly crisis situations which endanger world peace such as that created in Cuba by the Soviet Union one year ago.

The development of this remarkable MACH 3 airplane has created an entirely new aircraft technology, which is now being turned to other uses. The Department of Defense is purchasing additional aircraft of this type to be used as long range interceptors for defense of the United States and Canada. These will begin to appear at normal Air Force installations in 1964 and 1965. The development of a MACH 3 supersonic transport aircraft will benefit greatly from the lessons learned here and arrangements are fixed to make the important technical developments, under appropriate safeguards, available to all contractors who are bidding for this contract.

The detailed performance of the CIA airplane will remain strictly classified and no further statements will be issued on this matter.